

FEDERAL BUILDING AT GASTONIA, N. C.

JANUARY 20, 1921.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed.

Mr. THOMPSON, from the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany S. 4332.]

The Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds, to which was referred the bill (S. 4332) entitled "An act to exchange the present Federal building and site at Gastonia, North Carolina, for a new site and building," having duly considered the same, hereby make report of it to the House with the recommendation that the bill be amended by striking out in line 10, page 2, of the bill, the words "which is hereby appropriated," and that as so amended the bill do pass.

The act of June 25, 1910, authorized an appropriation of \$65,000 for a site and building at Gastonia, N. C., and the act of March 4, 1913, increased the limit of cost to \$85,000. The present site was acquired in 1910 at a cost of \$14,750, and the building was completed in 1916 at a cost of \$66,345.17, making a total cost for the site and building of \$81,095.17.

It appears that the city of Gastonia has more than doubled its population in the last 10 years, gaining 123 per cent, and it was stated to the committee in the hearing on the bill that the greater part of this increase has taken place during the last five years, or since the present building was erected, and said building is now inadequate to meet the needs of the postal service in that city.

The Citizens' National Bank of Gastonia desires to acquire the present Federal building and site, and offers in exchange therefor a site about twice as large (which the Treasury Department estimates is worth at least \$27,000), and \$175,000, or so much thereof as may be necessary, to erect on the new site a stone-faced building sufficient to meet the requirements of the Government. The Treasury Depart-

ment has investigated the matter and recommends favorable action on the bill, as is evidenced by its report on the same, which is as follows:

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
Washington, May 28, 1920.

The CHAIRMAN COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS,
House of Representatives.

SIR: Reference is made to your request of May 19 for a report in connection with bill S. 4332, which proposes to authorize the exchange of the present Federal building and site at Gastonia, N. C., for a new site and the funds necessary to erect a new building thereon within a limit of cost of \$175,000.

The site for the present Federal building at Gastonia was acquired in 1910 at a cost of \$14,750. The building was completed and occupied in 1916 at a cost of \$66,345.17, making a total cost for site and building of \$81,095.17.

The Citizens' National Bank of Gastonia desires to acquire the present Federal building and site, and offers in exchange therefor a new and larger site in what promises to be the civic center of the town and funds with which to erect on said site a stone-faced building sufficient to meet the requirements of the Government, in amount \$175,000, or so much thereof as may be necessary. The proposed site is within the 80-rod limit from the principal railway station and therefore meets the requirements in regard to the delivery of mails, free of cost to the Government, at the building.

An investigation of the matter has been made by a representative of this department, and it is believed the proposition is an advantageous one to the Government. If, because of increased postal activities which are general throughout the country, it should become necessary to extend the present building, the site would not be of sufficient size to allow for such an extension. It is the experience of the department that in cases where it has been necessary to dispose of Federal buildings and sites in order to provide new and larger accommodations the amount realized from the sale of the property in most instances does not greatly exceed the selling price of the site alone.

It is estimated that the value of the present site and building does not exceed \$165,000, and the Government is offered a new site worth at least \$27,000 and \$175,000 in cash, or so much thereof as may be necessary, to erect a new stone-faced and modern building of adequate size for the Government requirements.

It is understood that the option of the acceptance of the bank's proposal will remain open until July 1, and if in the opinion of Congress the Government should avail itself of this apparently advantageous proposition action upon the legislation should be taken at an early date.

Respectfully,

D. F. HOUSTON, *Secretary.*

In the event the exchange is made, the Citizens National Bank is willing to allow the Government to continue to use the present building until the new building is erected.

It might be stated that the present site is not of sufficient size to permit of an addition to the building in later years, should such an addition be required. The new site is located within the 80-rod limit from the principal railway station, thereby meeting the requirements with regard to the delivery of mails free of charge to the Government; it is in the civic center of the town adjoining the courthouse and city hall, and your committee considers this an advantageous proposition for the Government.